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POLICE SYSTEM REINFORCES BIGOTRY,
DIRECTOR OF MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION ASSERTS

BEVERLY HILLS: In the United States, local police departments are packing urban ghettos with highly-prejudiced bigots, according to a former consultant to the U. S. Department of Justice on the matter of police community relations. BURTON LEVY, Director of the Community Relations Division of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, attacks local police systems, saying that the police department recruits a significant number of bigots, reinforces the bigotry through the department's value system and socialization with older officers, and then takes the worst of the officers and puts them on duty in the ghetto, where "the opportunity to act out the prejudice is always available." The typical urban police department, he notes, recruits a sizeable number of people with racist attitudes, socializes them into a system with a strong racist element, and takes the officer who cannot advance and puts him in the ghetto where he has day-to-day contact with the black citizens."

Levy refutes the popular assumption that the problem with police-Negro relations is because of a few "bad eggs" in a police department of 1,000 or 10,000 men. Writing in a special urban violence issue of The AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST, a research-oriented journal in the social and behavioral sciences, Levy puts the blame for police-Negro friction almost solely on prevalent police department practices.

In his article, "Cops in the Ghetto: A Problem of the Police System," Burton quotes from Michigan Civil Rights Commission statistics listing that

from 1964 to 1965, a period of two years, of 103 complaints filed against the Detroit Police Department, the Commission found probable cause to credit the allegations in no less than 31 cases.

Levy cites police secrecy and defensiveness as the reasons for their failure in dealing with the problem of police-Negro relations. "The old cop clearly doesn't want interference or review because 'only an officer knows how to handle the situation.' The good professional doesn't want interference or outside review because the hallmark of a profession, they believe, is the ability to self-regulate the activities of those within the profession." Levy concludes.

Left alone, the local systems will do nothing to change police-Negro relations. "What is required," Levy says, "are specific objectives by a mayor and police chief, committed to and strong enough to battle and prevail over the system in their community--a Wilson or McNamara type."

Levy's article appears in the special March-April issue of ABS which is available at \$3.50 a copy from Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90212. Quantity rates are available for educational or bulk orders.